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# SERMON

Preached at the  
**OXFORDSHIRE-FEAST,**  
*Novemb. 25. 1674.*  
In the Church of *St. Michael's Cornhill,*  
**L O N D O N.**

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By *John Woolley* M. A. and late Fellow of  
*Trin. Coll. in Oxon:* And Rector of *St. Michael's*  
*Crooked-lane, LONDON.*

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L O N D O N,

Printed by *A. Maxwell,* for *R. Royston,* Book-  
seller to His Most Sacred Majesty, at the  
*Angel in Amen-Corner. MDCLXXV.*



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*To my Honour'd Countrymen, the Oxfordshire  
Gentlemen : And particularly to the Stewards,*

Mr. SAMUEL SKINNER.

THOMAS CROSSE.

JAMES PAUL.

MARTIN STAMP.

JEFFERY FLEXNEY.

THOMAS HASLEWOOD.

EDWARD COLLINGWOOD.

Mr. EDMUND WANSELL.

PHILIP BURTON.

FRANCIS SMART.

THOMAS ROUS.

EDMUND HASLEWOOD.

THOMAS BARRET.

Honour'd Countrymen,

**T**HE chief thing which I have to  
say to you at present is, To beg  
your pardon for my telling the World,  
how poorly you were provided with a Ser-  
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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

mon, who had taken such excellent care in all things else, to the Honour and Content of your Countrymen. However you may partly thank your selves for it; since being straitned in your time, I knew not upon what occasion some of you were pleas'd to hope, That I could in 13 days provide any thing worthy your selves, or the Honour of your Assembly. It might indeed have been more both for your Credit and mine own, if I had declin'd this publick Service, till Age and Experience had added Strength to my Eloquence, and Authority to my Person: But I must confess, I took this Task upon me, out of that eagerness and fondness which I had to be publickly known and own'd as one of your Countrymen. And herein I consulted more my own Credit than yours; since 'tis more real Honour to be reckon'd among you, my Countrymen, than I can possibly lose in the Printing this Sermon, though it were far worse than it is. Wherefore I again intreat your pardon, and good opinion for me. Nor is it to be suppos'd, that while I am pleading for Charity and good Nature, I my self should be excluded from having any share in them. When you go on to read this Sermon, as you will find many faults and weak-



## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*weaknesses in it, so you will I hope find some Arguments which may perswade you to excuse them. So that you have here a very just opportunity to practise what I have recommended to you. Now having said this, I take my leave of you : Beseeching Almighty God, to increase the Honour and Gallantry of your Design, by continuing this Yearly and Charitable Solemnity ; by furnishing our Country with Stewards as Generous as Faithful, and as Good every way as you are ; And with far far better Preachers than I was :*

Who am,

Honour'd Countrymen,

Your most faithful and

most obliged Countryman,

JOHN WOOLLER.



GEN. xiiij. 8.

*And Abraham said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my Herd-men and thy Herd-men : For we be Brethren.*

**T**Here are in my Text two General Parts, which I shall consider in this Sermon : And the first of these two Parts, is, *Abraham's* generous Condescension, his eagerness and forward compliance for Peace and Friendliness, contain'd in these words, *And Abraham said unto Lot, &c.*

In the other part of my Text, is, *Abraham's* Reason for this kind and peaceable temper, to be maintain'd between *Lot* and himself, *For we be Brethren.*

Now that I may in some measure promote, what I hope doth naturally grow in your Bosoms (*Honour'd Country-men*), namely, a large, open, and diffusive Charity ; a gallant, friendly temper of mind : I say to this intent, I have chosen out for you the Example of our Father *Abraham* ; great in his Wealth and Ho-

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nour, but greater far in his Faith and Charity : An Example known of and approved by every one of you, I am perswaded : An Example by Gods Providence preserv'd to us, and to our days, through the many spoils, changes, and different events of three thousand six hundred and odd years ; and this not without Gods special design to be followed by us also in these later Ages. For we cannot imagine, that the Holy Ghost intended we should read the Scriptures as we do a Chronicle of our own Nation, or as we do a Story of *Cæsar* and *Pompey* : But that we should read, and mark, and learn to do as *Abraham* did. Gods Providence in giving and preserving to us the holy Scriptures, being a far nobler design than to entertain our fancies, or furnish our discourse ; it being, among other things, to make us kind and peaceable, gentle, meek, and complying ; as you will find *Abraham* to have been in the Story of my Text. By his Example then we are to learn our own duty ; by his demeanour in this place and in this affair, we are all bound to manage our own lives and behaviours. This is the Apostles way of Preaching, I am sure, *Heb.* ch. 11, 12. And 'tis St. *James's* command also, *ch.* 5. v. 10.

And

And this I have said by way of Preface, to justifie my intended Discourse, which shall be by way of Example, ( it being the most ingenuous manner of dealing with you ), and to shew you the force and value of such an Argument: Hoping, that you will with candour and reverence hearken to a Discourse of the same nature, though it come far short of the Apostle's Preaching, as to the circumstances of Gravity and Eloquence.

To begin then: We find from the 11th Chapter of this Book of *Genesis* v. 31. that *Abraham* was indeed Uncle to *Lot*, though in this place he calls him Brother; a compellation among Kinred not unusual in those times, and in those Countries; *Lot* being the Son of *Haran*, which *Haran* was the Brother of *Abraham*, as by the place doth appear. *Abraham* then, you see, was *Lots* Superiour, as to the line of Kinred, and the common Rules of Civility and Good-manners.

Again, *Lot* was a Fatherless Child, desolate and without a Parent: As being the Son of that man, who is particularly remarkt ('twas it seems a strange thing), I say, *Lot* was the Son of that *Haran*, who is particularly remarkt to have died before his own Father, *Gen.* 11. 28.

*Lots* condition then, when *Abraham* took him into his own Family, was so much the more sad and calamitous, as being so strange and unusual : And hereupon ( as may be suppos'd ) good *Abraham* takes him into his own Family ; deals as tenderly with him, as he would have done with his own Child , furnishes him with Flocks and Herds, with Lands and Possessions. Now *Abraham*, we may be sure, was very great and powerful ; his very Countenance was an honour and support : Yet this *Abraham* takes with him *Lot* the Orphan, makes him sharer with him in the variety of his Travels and his Fortune ; gives him the honour of his Company, and the protection of his Power. And upon this score also was *Abraham* far greater than *Lot* ; much the better man every way ; as being *Lots* Uncle and Guardian, as being *Lots* Prince, and *Lots* Benefactor : Yet behold ! even to this young man, to this *Lot* his Nephew and Pupul, to one beneath him, and beholden to him, is *Abraham* thus kind and condescending. He stands not upon the punctilio's of nice Honour, or the fond appointments of a Ceremony : But though a Prince high and mighty, generous and munificent ; yet

yet he stoops down, and humbles himself to be at peace with his Inferior ; to be at peace with one who was bound by the Laws of Nature and Nations, by the Laws of Thankfulness, Custom, and Good-manners, to have submitted unto him : That is, *Abraham* looks upon Honour and Majesty, stateliness and austere distance, to be meer trifles, when compar'd with Love and Charity ; when compar'd with gentleness, benevolence, and just compliance. *Abraham*, even mighty *Abraham*, addresses himself to one that should have waited upon *Him*, pays respect to his inferior, casts off all the Robes of Majesty, and exposes himself naked to Scorn and Contempt, rather than loosen the Cords of Friendship, or break asunder the Bonds of Peace.

And this should we also do. We should be any thing rather than unkind or uncharitable. We should in all our conversation be courteous and affable, kind and familiar to each other, though Providence and a successful industry, have plac'd any of us some steps above our Brethren. God hath set no man so much higher than another, but that we are all within a Call : Even he that sits

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1 Cor. 12. 27.

at the top, may with a very calm and gentle voice of Peace reach the Ears of him that lies below. We are indeed something above one another, but 'tis a very small matter, 'tis only as the Members in the same Body, (which is the Apostle's instance, and not mine) ; I say, some men are indeed higher than their Brethren, but 'tis as the Head is above the Hand: Though one be the Servant and the other the Master, yet we can with little or no pains, nay often to our own ease, stoop down our Head to lean and repose it upon our Arm ; and with as little pains can the Hand be lifted up to feed, and stroak, and refresh the Head. In short, every one of us here present, may at one time or another, be a comfort and support, an ease and pleasure to each other ; the highest to the lowest, and the lowest to the highest : He that is rich and great, may comfort and make glad the Souls of the poor ones ; and he that is poor, may oblige the rich good man, by affording him opportunities to gratifie his own just desires of doing good. Thus may we all in our several places be serviceable to one another : Nor are we to live at such a distance, but that we may be within the

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compass of a neighbourly conversation, and a familiar acquaintance.

But what is more to my present purpose : If any of us ( my Brethren ) should chance at any time to fall out and quarrel about Flocks and Herds, Lands and Possessions ( which God forbid ) ; I say, if this should happen, as I hope it will not, yet 'tis no discredit, you see, no sordid abject debasement, even for the best of you to begin peace and reconciliation with your offending or your offended Brother. It will be no disparagement to your Courage, to your Birth, or your Quality, if great men, as in other cases, so in this also, take place, and have the precedence, to begin the methods of peace and forgiveness. *Abraham* in my Text did so, you see ; and for this stands high upon the Pillars of Fame to this very day : He condescended, and as it were submitted to his offending inferior : And yet for all this, I appeal to your own Souls and Consciences, whether any of you ever thought the worse of *Abraham* for it. 'Tis indeed a very common thing, to see a poor man crouch and cringe to his better : But 'twill be *spectaculum Deo dignum*, to speak with *Seneca*, 'twill be

be a sight worth the view and approbation of God himself, to see a great man condescend and intreat for peace with a poor man : I say, 'twill be a sight pleasing to God and his holy Angels ; inasmuch as 'tis the common practice of Heaven so to do, or else God never had been, never would be reconciled to us miserable dust and ashes. How beautiful a thing then will it be, to see a man not puffed up with his Riches and Honour, as with a Poyson or a Disease ; but by the weight of his abundance prest lower, and bowed down to his poor desolate Brother.

And I the rather commend this to you ( my Brethren ) because it often happens, that a great man may promote peace and friendliness, when a poor man dares not. Many men are not stubborn, but modest ; they are not froward and peevish, but very bashful ; they are indeed willing, but cannot be so bold, as to proffer peace, or even to ask forgiveness. They are not like the sturdy Oak, which will not bow even to a Tempest ; but like the Hair of our Head, which will bend and bow to any thing, but is apt to be blown aside by every Breath. Such are many men, willing enough to comply with  
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peace, hugely capable of being bow'd to any shape ; but the blast of a great man's mouth, some few blustering words quite discourage them, they fly into Corners, and there pine away in secret and in scorn. This is a consideration of high Morality, and worthy of your noblest Charity : And from whence I could heartily wish, That you who are great and good, would learn to pity such men, to call and invite, to encourage and persuade your meaner Brethren to be Friends, if ever interest or a sad accident cast discontents among you.

But on the other side, suppose it be stubbornness in a mean man (as Poverty is often froward and peevish, and we must bear with it), I say, suppose it be stubbornness in a mean man; yet it becomes men of Parts and Education, to teach Clowns their Duty, with calmness and gravity, with good words and prudent behaviour, to soften and polish such rude and ungarnisht minds. 'Tis such mens Disease and Distemper to be quarrellsome and froward; And 'tis the good man's Duty, even to help and pity them in this condition : For we are not to suffer a Con-

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vulſive man to lye in the Fire, into which his angry Sickneſs hath caſt him, though in the taking him up, his Diſeaſe, and not he, ſtrike us on the Face, or ſmite us on the Breſt: For we are to remember, that in ſuch a caſe he will do as much even to himſelf. And this I ſay, not to encourage the Clown in his clowniſhneſs, or the froward man in his frowardneſs: But to ſhew you, that Peace and Love, Friendſhip and Charity, are to be procured at any rate; And that the rich man ought to ſeek peace, and enſue it (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) when the poor man will not, or rather dares not offer at it.

But farther, becauſe this Day's buſineſs, and my Text oblige me to a larger Diſcourſe of Friendſhip and Unity; Give me leave again to recommend to you the Example of *Abraham*, in this following method.

And firſt, Let us take notice of *Abraham's* willingneſs to be at peace, from the manner of his endeavouring after it, expreſt in theſe words, *Let there be no ſtriſe, I pray thee, &c.*

Secondly, Let us take notice of *Abraham's*

*ham's* willingness to be at peace, in the matter in which this quarrel was like to be; namely, in the matter of worldly gain, in Lands and Possessions; together with the extent of it, it was like to grow even among their Servants also, among their Herdmen, &c.

As to the manner of *Abraham's* address; you have partly seen it already, in his applying himself to *Lot*, his Nephew and Inferior; and it is farther express'd in his humble words, and gentle intreaties, *Let there be no strife, I pray thee.* I pray thee! What lowly, meek, and friendly language is here! He that could have commanded, intreats; he that was Lord and Master, prays and beseeches for peace. What melting Language was this! How must this *dominari affectibus*, rule and controul the Passions, far more than the Eloquence of *Cicero* or *Demosthenes*! or to put it into the phrase of a better Orator than both these, *His words indeed are sweeter than honey, yea than honey, or the honey-comb.* Nor was this civil and obliging Language a fit of Courtship, or a good humour only; but the usual and frequent practice of this mighty Prince. An instance of whose courteous behaviour, fit to be ta-

ken notice of by all proud and morose men; we have in *Gen. 23.* where also the very *Heathen*, the *Sons of Heth*, may upbraid our *Quakers*, and such like untaught and illiterate Clowns. The Story in short is this :

*Sarah* was now dead ; and *Abraham*, though grief might have made him fullen , comes and treats friendlily and obligingly with the *Sons of Heth*, about a burying-place ; and they do it in such language, and such a manner, that even the Courts of civiliz'd Nations cannot exceed them. So early and so natural is the practice of civil words, respectful Behaviour, and honourable Compellations ; for at *ver. 5, 6*, we thus read :

*And the Children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him, Hear us my Lord, Thou art a mighty Prince among us, in the choice of our Sepulchers bury thy dead. Ver. 7. And Abraham stood up, and bowed himself to the people of the Land---* And so he doth again at the *12th* Verse. He doth not, it seems, think it inconsistent with his Religion, or inconsistent with his Honour, to bow his Body, and pay his respect even to the Heathen, in whose esteem he was a mighty Prince. He takes their awful and civil compellation

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on of Lord, and gives them back his bodily Complement ; though as far from Superstition, and as tender of Gods Honour, as any of our morose Pretenders can be. Let those men therefore consider this, and go not you into their ways, a main part of whose Religion it is, to be unmannerly, both to God and to man.

But to return to my Text : We are to take notice in it, of *Abraham's* kind and meek language, of his praying and beseeching, even while he was at odds with his Nephew. Which may be remembred to the conviction, and be it spoken to the shame of us Christians ; who in a contest or a quarrel, in a small pet, or some trifling disagreement, do rail at and backbite, do slander and abase each other. Cursings and evil-speakings are our frequent Arguments, and we *shoot out our arrows, even bitter words*. This enrages and envenoms the Wound, adds bitterness to the Gall, turns a Dispute into a Frenzy, and makes that Madness which should be Reason.

But on the other side ; when do we hear such language as this in my Text, or to whose Ear hath the report come ? *Let there*

*be*



be no, &c. between me and thee, I pray thee, my Brother. I beseech thee for peace my Friend; Come, let's agree, and dwell together in Unity. No, we are so far from such meek and tender Expressions, so far generally from intreating for peace, that when men speak unto us of it, we make our selves ready for Battel. We will not move one step forward to be at peace: But we fix our selves, and sit down in the Chair of the Scornful, *Ἐπὶ καθέδρα λοιμῶν. In cathedra pestium,* as *Tertullian* of old reads it out of the *Greek* Translation of the Bible. The Scornful man is a Pest and Infection; his Breath poisons the Air, and blasts the credit of all that come near him. Such cruel things are bitter words, that they are and may be compar'd to what we fear most of all, even to the Plague and Pestilence. Let us therefore avoid all such unnatural and reproachful words. Let our Discourse, even in Disputes and Controversies, be amiable and obliging, be courteous, peaceful, and condescending. And let all such men know, who are given to a proud and haughty speech, that *Abraham*, a better man than the best of such Scorners, chides them severely in this Example,

*Tert. lib. de  
spectac. sub.  
initio.*



ample, and *though he be dead, yet speaketh*. Nor must they look to dwell in his peaceful Bosom, or to have *one drop of water to cool those tongues, which before-hand are set on fire of Hell*, as *St. James* expresseth it.

Cap. 3.

Wherefore, *Beloved Country-men*, seeing these things are so, Let us wholly conform our language and behaviour, our endeavours and our intreaties, to peace and friendship. If our Enemies curse, let us bless ; if they revile, let us beseech. And who can tell, but a soft word may melt that man's heart, who will not be corrected with Scorpions, nor subdued with a rod of Iron ? Thus have I done with the manner of *Abraham's* address, his peaceful and kind approaches ; hoping, that your Education and good manners, your natural goodness, and your Christian Piety will improve this Example to the publick honour, quiet, and advantage both of your selves and others.

As to the remaining part ( in which I shall be short ), namely, the matter of this debate and growing quarrel ; 'twas about Flocks and Herds, about Fields and Possessions : And no wonder, for Riches and Gain have made Breaches in the closest and most compact  
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Friendships. These have made Fathers cruel, and Sons disobedient; have torn Families into pieces, and scatter'd blood and ruine among the dearest Relations: And therefore it being the common fate of mankind, to quarrel for such mean concerns, I cannot but conjure you, by Charity and Religion, by the Honour and Remembrance of your Country, and lastly, by this great Example, That you quarrel not about such things. Suffer not your selves to be hurried by this common Stream into the wide Sea and open Tempests of wranglings and disagreements. Waste not your Time, and your Estates, and your Charity to boot, in long and vexatious Suits at Law. Prefer your Charity before your Riches: Prefer the peace of God, and of your Neighbour, and of your own Consciences, before wealth and abundance, before your profit or your pleasure. For here also *Abraham* is your Example, and bids you do so; who rather than fall out with his Nephew *Lot*, gives him his choice, and parts with a Land that was well water'd, *Even as the Garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest to Zoar,* Verse 10, of this Chapter.

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But if necessity, and domestick prudence to keep our own, cast us upon disputes and controversies ; Go first, and intreat for peace, pray to God for his help, and to thine angry Brother for his compliance : Try all the arts and methods of peace ; so shalt thou have the Blessing of *Abraham*, even the eternal Blessings of the Peace-makers.

And this we must do, not only between our selves and our Neighbours, but between our Servants and their Servants ; according to the extent of *Abraham's* Charity here in my Text, *Let there be no strife between my Herdmen and thy Herdmen.* We must take care to spread and enlarge our Charity, and to let it drop down from our Head to the Skirts of our Garments, even to the meanest that belong to us. Servants are sometimes petulant and querulous, froward and talkative ; and many a man by upholding an unmannerly Child, or a pragmatistical Servant, hath enrag'd his Neighbour, and lost his Friend. 'Tis therefore our duty to teach our Children and Servants modesty and civil language : To plant peace in the tender youth, and to fix it in the basest dispositions. We are to increase the Dominions of Charity, and to enlarge

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the Curtains of her Habitation, that she may dwell even among the meanest of the people; that is, we are to deal our love and good nature, as we do our Bread, even to all our Family.

Lastly, When we are made Friends with any man, as we must cease to do evil, so we must learn to do good to him and his. Many men say, when they are agreed with a Neighbour, I am friends with him at last, but I have done with him, I'll take care never to deal with him more. This is the common Rhetorick of cruel men, and the Eloquence of worldly wisdom. I do not forbid Caution and just Prudence in such cases; but I say, we must do as we find *Abraham* doing in the next Chapter to my Text; not only reconciling himself to *Lot* (as here) even to his own Loss, but venturing his own Life and Fortune for him, against the combin'd force of his barbarous Enemies. We must, when we are made Friends with any man, assist him with our Strength and with our Riches, with our Counsel and with our Interest, and that too in his greatest necessities. Our Lives and our Discourses, our Wealth, our Servants and Children, all that we have  
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are to be disposed for Peace and Charity. We must plead the cause of the absent, and intreat those we meet face to face : And we must allow men to plead for themselves, and to make their own excuses ; and not be as cruel to one another, as we are told the Heathens were to our Forefathers, the Christians, who allow'd to all men, even to the most vile Malefactors, an Advocate to plead for them, save only to the Christians. Wherefore, as I said before, so I say again, Let us be kind and familiar, courteous and affable, intreating and easie to be intreated ; *For*

*We be Brethren* : The Second General of my Text, namely, *Abraham's* Reason for this kind and peaceable temper to be maintain'd between *Lot* and himself, *For we be Brethren*, &c.

Now a Brother carries in its Name all the endearments of Nature , the strongest and most valiant Arguments for Love that can be. Even those Christians of old, who were so famous for loving one another, could not find out a fitter name than this : And though the Heathens scofft at them for it, yet they stood to their name of *Fratres*, of Brethren, and made it good by their Practice ; so lo-

ving and so friendly, that they had every thing common but their Wives. And indeed the Love of Brethren is the very Seed and Root of Kingdoms and Societies, of Cities and Commonwealths : And the eternal Rules of Peace and Justice must be first maintain'd in private Families, or else there can be no such thing as Publick Weal and Society. The Reason then which *Abraham* gives for Peace, is the most plain and natural, the most agreeable and convincing Argument in the World. Nor may we think *Abraham* so little skill'd in Passions, in the Arts of Eloquence and Perswasion, as not to apply the most suitable Topick in a matter his Soul so much desired.

But farther yet : The *Hebrew* adds more strength and lustre to *Abraham's* Argument ; nor can I well see, why this Reading I am about to mention, is thrust out into the Margin, unless it be to comply with the *Greek* Translation. For in the Original it runs thus :

*Eib. Polyglot.* כ אנשים אחים אנחנו *For men Brethren are we ;* follow'd by the *Syriack* also, and *Chaldee* Translations : *For Men Brethren are we ;* that is, we are Men as well as Brethren ; our Nature as well as our Kinred bids us not to quar-

quarrel. 'Tis beastly indeed, and inhumane. 'Tis like the Wolves of the Desert, and the Lyons of the Wilderness, and not like Men: From whose very name good-nature hath its Title, and is call'd Humanity.

But farther yet, there is more in this Argument still: *We are, saith Abraham, Anaschim, Achim, perishing, mortal Brethren*; and therefore, let us not quarrel: we have enemies enough beside, the Devil and his Angels, Death and Sickness, and ten thousand accidents, to consume and to dissolve us; yea, and the very Air doth prey upon and devour us. *We are sickly, perishing Brethren, and therefore let there be no strife between us.* This is in short the sum of *Abraham's* Argument. And give me leave to expostulate the case with you also; For are not we such also, *my Brethren*? Are not we mortal, fading, sickly Creatures? Therefore, let us also be at peace. For what an ugly sight is it, to see two weak dying men grasping for a Morsel they cannot swallow, or for some pleasant Toy which they cannot enjoy; to see them scratch at, and offer violence to each other, to employ that small leisure which their Features have from Pangs and Convulsions, in threatening  
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*Iren.* lib. 1.  
cap. 21. E-  
dit. 1625.  
Colon.

Looks, and ghastly Menaces. And such are we, *perishing Brethren*, every day going to our long home, and therefore let us not quarrel at our parting; but like Friends that are taking leave, let us employ that little time we have, in shaking hands, in love and kindness, in Charity and good wishes: For though *Menander* an Heretick (in *Irenæus*) brag'd that his Disciples, when once baptized, could neither wax old, nor grow sick; yet time and death gave him the Lye, and we are all *Anashim Achim, perishing Brethren* for all that. Thus have I enlarged on *Abraham's* Reason: And this Argument is to remain upon our Consciences and our Memories also (*Honoured Countrymen*) *For we are Brethren*: Brethren in the same great Family, the Church of Christ: Brethren in the same Protestant Religion: Brethren of the same County, and most of us Brethren in the same City: We are tied together to Love and Peace, by all the Obligations of Religion, of humane nature, and of humane frailty: We, even we, are under all those Obligations with which wise and peaceable *Abraham* prevail'd over his Nephew. Let us therefore be at unity, as Brethren in an House; let us agree and  
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consent to do good ; yea, let us rejoice together for the good of others : Then shall this Solemnity be a Solemnity of Blessing ; and *Agape* may be the Name for our Feasts ; they may be Charity it self, as the Meetings of the Ancients were call'd : And 'tis ( God be thanked ) in our Power to be so. In order to this, give me leave to recommend to you at this time two Circumstances, wherein it were to be wisht we could all agree : And then I have done.

First then, Let us be united in our Religion : For if *Abraham* complied so much, and took such care to be at peace in worldly Affairs ; How much more should we strive to be at peace in our Religion, whose very business is Charity, and whose Gospel is a Gospel of peace ? Consider your tender Mother, the Church of *England*, and be not easily perswaded to think amiss of her ; of her who hath pray'd and intreated her disobedient Sons to come to her, who hath divested her self of many innocent and honourable Priviledges, to satisfy the weak and discontented : And I hope no man would have her go naked, would strip her of all her decent Ornaments, to content the Pride and

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Avarice of her disobedient Children ; those Children whom she *would have gathered under her wings, as a Hen gathereth her Chicken, and they would not.* There are indeed many Pretences and Suggestions, many Scruples and Objections, which I may not answer now ; many Jealousies and Fears of Popery and Superstition : But 'tis well, if the *Romans* do not serve us, as one of them did the mutinous *Jews* of old ; for *Pilate*, as *Ensebins* tells us out of *Josephus*, I say, *Pilate*, when he was made Governour by *Tiberius*, and when he could not hope the *Jews* would ever suffer him to bring in his Emperors Standards and Images openly into the City (for the *Jews* abhorr'd and detested such things, and the forenam'd *Josephus* a *Jew* reckons it among *Solomon's* Crimes, his making the Similitude of Brazen Oxen under the Molten Sea, and of *Lyons* on his Throne) ; I say, this *Pilate* contriv'd to bring those Images into the City in the dark night, and cover'd too, and veil'd over : But when he had once got them in, it cost the *Jews* many tears and lamentations, much danger and more sorrow, before they could get them remov'd again. And let us take care, and I pray God we do not find

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*Enseb. Hist.*  
lib.2. cap.6.  
*Joseph. lib.2*  
de bello Ju-  
daic. c. 18.

*Joseph. Ant.*  
l. 8. l. 1.  
Frob.  
2. Chron. 4.

Popery and Superstition, Images and Idols maskt under the Garments of Zeal and Reformation, brought into this Church ; which was once, and is still the Glory and Support of the Protestant Interest.

But secondly, That which I chiefly design at this time, and I humbly beg you all to agree in, Is a Generous, and Free, and Charitable Supply for your Poor Countrymen: For those, who mourn in secret, and dwell in the low Tabernacles of Smoak and desolate want: For those, who themselves also would have made a part of this Solemnity, had not God in his Providence disposed them to a sadder Entertainment. Remember the Fatherless and the Widow, whose cry cometh up to Heaven, even now while we are paying our Devotions toward it: Those, who sustain the necessities and hardships, the cold and hunger of the whole year upon the hopes of being comforted by the Bounty and Charity of this day. Nor need I use many words, to perswade you, *my Brethren*: For, besides the ties of Religion and natural Compassion, methinks we of all other men, have the greatest Obligations upon us to be Charitable: We were born in that County, which

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is blest with an University, the very Seat and dwelling-place of Charity. She lies scatter'd indeed in private Bosomes, and hath now and then taken up her Lodgings in other places: But in your Country is her Mansion-house, there is her Throne, and place of abode. It was in your County that she first appeared in State; and 'twas *Oxford*, that was blest with the early designs of Charity, that being the place where the two first endow'd Colleges of *Christendom* were built, as *Cambden* assures us. From your County one of our best Kings (*Charles* the Martyr always excepted), namely, *Edward* the Confessor, began his life: And another of our most valiant Kings, *Richard* the first, took in his great Spirit from your Air. Thus Honourable and Famous hath your County been, even above any County in the World; and hath but one Equal, and that in our own Nation too.

Let us not then degenerate from the Credit and Honour of our Native Soyl; but let us be a Repute to our Country, and a Support to our poor Countrymen. Let part of that Charity which dwelt among your Forefathers, possess your minds: And let us answer the

*Cambd. in  
Oxfordsh. p.  
381. Eng.*

*At Islip.*

*Cambden  
ibid.  
At Oxon.*

the expectation of the World, and the hope of our poor Brethren at this Day.

For beside our Religion, and the Genius of our Country, even Nature and Pagan Philosophy bids us be Charitable to the Indigent. And *Aristotle* an Heathen can advise, That the rich are bound to supply the poor with Necessaries. Nor can I imagine, what can hinder any of us from this natural and pleasant Duty; unless we detain that from the poor, which we design to bestow upon our sins; unless we forbear to give that, which we have already devoted to Wantonness, Intemperance, and costly Follies. It concerns us therefore, to be more Temperate and Sober, and then we shall be more Generous and Charitable. Let us spend less upon our Vices, upon our gaudy and vain Apparel, upon costly Banquets, and endless Quarrels; and then we shall have enough to satisfy the just Conveniencies of our Quality, and yet enough to spare to the empty Bowels and craving Necessities of the poor. And here I may recommend to you the frugal Modesty in Diet and Apparel of the ancient Christians; whose Women (which in most Nations are allow'd to be clad some-

*Arist. l. 6. p. 20-  
lit. c. 5.*

what more delicately ) observ'd a wonderful Plainness and Gravity. For *Tertullian* in his *Apology* for the Christians, tells us of their Women, *Aurum nulla noverat preterquam unico digito*, &c. The Women wore no Gold, nay scarce knew any, but their Wedding-Ring. But the contrary was an early Vice, even in the Church, especially among the Women; whose Ornaments and Apparels, colour'd Garments and painted Petticoats, *Tertullian* sticks not to call the Invention not of men, but of evil Angels: But 'twas his advice, and from him let me give it you, to take care of this Vice; and to remember, that Gravity in Clothes, Plainness and Decency in Apparel, are the Maintainers of those two most excellent Vertues, Modesty and Charity. Nor may we think, that this advice of his proceeded from the Necessity of the times, or the Poverty of the Christians: For the same Father tells us, nay and he tells the Heathen to their Faces, That the Christians gave more Money away in the Streets, than the Heathens spent upon their gods and their Altars, upon their gaudy and their costly Superstitions. And what was the reason, why the Christians did and were able

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*Tert. Apol.*  
cap. 6.

*De culin*  
*fem. l. 2. c. 10*

*Apolog.*

to do so much? Why, I can give it you out of the same Father, (since I have began *Tert. Apol. cap. 43.* to speak out of him), namely, because they were temperate, chaste, and sober. For when the Heathens complain'd, that the Christians were a sort of Close-fisted men, that they spent no money at all; he bravely answers, But I'll tell you, saith he, who are they that complain, they are the Brothel-houses, and the Taverns; they are the Ministers of Lust, and Luxury, and Vice, that complain, and none else. And let all such complain, yea for ever complain among us also.

And if we are curious to know, how the Christians spent their Money; the same man *Apol. cap. 39.* tells us, They had a Box, wherein every one monthly cast in what his Charity and Estate allowed. And this went, *non potaculis, non epulis*, not to maintain Gluttony and Drunkenness; but to relieve the poor, to bury the poor; to Children without Father or Mother, or any subsistence; to the Aged, to the Imprisoned, and such like poor Christians. Nor can I conclude with, and I think you cannot take a better patern, than this; nor can you grudge, I hope, to do that once a Year, which the ancient Christians (who were

were under worse circumstances than most of you are ) did once every Month.

Thus have I from the Example of *Abraham* recommended to you Love, and Peace, and Condescension : And from the ancient and best Christians have I recommended Bounty and Charity to the Poor and Distressed : What remains, but that we go and do likewise, having the fear of God before us, while we are Feasting together, and the Charity of Christians, when we have done ? And having minded you of these two things, namely, of Temperance at our Dinner, and of Bounty after it ; I will conclude with a part of Scripture, which I hope you will all remember, taken out of *Nehemiah, ch. 8. ver. 10.*

*Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet ; and send Portions to them, for whom nothing is provided.*

*And then, as it follows, This day will be holy unto our Lord ; neither shall ye be sorry, for the joy of the Lord will be your strength.*

To whom, the Eternal Creator, Three Persons, and One God, be Glory and Honour,



nour, Might, Majesty, and Dominion,  
now and for ever.

Now the God of Patience and Consolation,  
grant you to be like-minded one towards  
another, according to Christ Jesus.

And, *The Blessing of God Almighty, the Fa-  
ther, Son, and Holy Ghost be among us,  
and remain with us this Day, and for ever  
more. Amen.*

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The End.

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